

*A Dog's Purpose*

By W. Bruce Cameron

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Fiction

319 Pages

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### Man's Best Friend... And So Much More

The phrase 'man's best friend' has been in existence for a long time, and for good reason too. Every dog has a purpose. Every dog has a meaning in this world, just as every human being does. And who doesn't love man's best friend? Dogs can be the most loving and supporting animals, as seen in the novel *A Dog's Purpose*, by W. Bruce Cameron. It is one of the most touching books, especially if you are a canine enthusiast. This novel is about the journey of one dog, who, through many different lives, tries to figure out his purpose. Bailey, the protagonist, is reborn three times in this novel, and each time believes he has found and accomplished his purpose. Hence, he is astonished each time he returns as a new dog, wondering what else there is for him to do on this earth. *A Dog's Purpose* is told from the point of view of the canine himself, giving dog owners the ultimate experience: being able to see life and themselves through the eyes of their best friend.

Mr. Cameron has written many works in his time, and is the New York Times bestselling author of *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter*. He has also

been twice voted the #1 best humor columnist by the National Society of Newspaper Columnists. Along with *A Dog's Purpose*, he also wrote *A Dog's Journey*. At age 54, he has had multiple dogs throughout his life, and that love of dogs is well-evident in his literary works.

In *A Dog's Purpose*, Cameron shows just how deep and meaningful every relationship between a boy and his dog is. This relationship is specifically well-shown in the book, as young Ethan grows up, as does his dog Bailey. Ethan is a young boy growing up when his mom brings home a Labrador retriever that was dying from heat exhaustion inside of a man's car. She brings him home, and as any knowing kid would, Ethan begs his mom to keep him, since his dad has a no-dogs policy. Little did they know, they would forge a relationship that would quite literally last a lifetime.

*A Dog's Purpose* was very well written, as it flows well and is extremely insightful. Cameron uses both detail and logic from the points of view of both man and his best friend. The novel is one of a kind, especially considering he wrote it from the perspective of a dog, which is considerably hard since we cannot exactly communicate with them or hear their thoughts. Plus, he wrote the book from the eyes of the same dog through multiple lives, making his novel far more complex than other books told from the point of view of animals. In one scene, Bailey, our Labrador protagonist, is locked in the garage for the day while Ethan is at school, and tears apart some pieces of clothing in there out of boredom. He is then scolded,

and isn't sure why. He says, "I was astounded at this false accusation. Bad? I'd been accidentally locked in the garage but was more than willing to forgive *them*. Why were they scowling at me like that, shaking their fingers at me?" It truly seems like the way a dog would react to something like this, although with a bit more intelligence. Being the dog owner that he is, Cameron wants to make his canine friends seem very intuitive.

The word choice used by Cameron was in no way advanced, providing for a quick and easy read. While I may be biased, especially considering the fact that I have two dogs, it would still be hard for anyone who loves animals to not like this heartfelt novel about the everlasting bond that is made between a boy and his dog. Throughout this emotional joyride, we learn about what makes dogs so very special to us; and even a part of us.

Most high school students will want to read *A Dog's Purpose*, particularly anyone in high school with a dog or love of animals. For one, it is always interesting to read something from the perspective of an animal. Plus, this novel is a quick read at just over 300 pages, making it able for students without much free time to read this book.

Overall, this book is a must-read for anyone with a dog or love of animals, or for anyone who simply wants to read a book that is unlike anything they have ever

read before. *A Dog's Purpose* truly shows why dogs are man's best friend, and why nobody is more loyal or caring than a dog.